



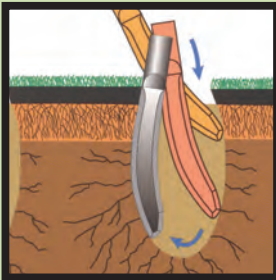
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South Florida Sweeps FGCSA Championships Yet Again

The team of Jason Bagwell, Kelly Cragin, Bob Harper, Howard Hulesbosch and Seth Strickland must be getting tired of lugging the Chapter Team Trophy back and forth from Miami. They probably have a long-term contract with a trophy company to engrave the winners' plaques. They don't have to change much on the die, just the last digit of the year, since the team from South Florida has run the table since 2005, most recently Oct. 6 at Southern Dunes in Haines City.

They are sporting enough to at least rotate the Individual Championship among the members. This year Bob Harper and Seth Strickland stepped aside to let Howard Hulesbosch put the golden cup on his mantel for a year.

A new bit of FGCSA trivia emerged at this year's event since the FGCSA Golf Committee changed the qualifications to play on the state's No. 1 team in the annual GCSAA Golf Championship. This year the winner of the individual division at the 2007 FTGA Conference Golf Tournament will replace the former "Low



These guys are good. Front row from left. Seth Strickland, Jason Bagwell and Howard Hulesbosch (Individual Winner also). Back row: Bob Harper and Kelly Cragin. Photo by Joel Jackson.

Average" qualifier as the fourth spot on the team. The trivia nugget is that Seth Strickland has now won all four of the qualifying titles: The Poa Annuia Classic, the Crowfoot Championship, the FGCSA Golf Tournament and the FTGA Golf Tournament. What do we call that? The FGCSA Qualifier Slam?

While Strickland holds the modern career Qualifier Slam title, I'm not sure that there might not be a former title holder, since the FTGA Championship was one of the original qualifiers back in the day before a long run of scramble-only tournaments. If any of our "older" golf greats (*I'm not mentioning*

any names!) have won all four titles in their careers, give me a call and we'll set the record straight.

Thanks to host superintendent Ward Pepperman and his crew for preparing the course to be a great test of golf and to Golf Professional Kevin Woodard and his staff for running another great event from start to scoring. With sixth-ranked USF and FSU games on TV, superintendent golfers were pleasantly entertained while the scores were being tabulated.

- Joe Ondo

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Number 5
Par 4 , 353 yards
Seminole G.C.
Photo by Daniel Zelazek



SEMINOLE GOLF CLUB

Rebuild It and They Will Come

By Joel Jackson, CGCS Retired

Well, they didn't really have to rebuild the Seminole Golf Club to attract a lot of customers. The course averages between 60,000 to 70,000 rounds per year, but the renovation did receive rave reviews in the local

paper and the local golfers seem to be quite pleased with the changes.

There is no question that the resulting Don Veller Seminole Golf Club on the Florida State University campus in Tallahassee and the Don Middleton Golf Complex, which is home to the school's

premiere Professional Golf Management program, is a state-of-the-art learning laboratory for future golf professionals.

The new two-story brick building with two wings houses offices, classrooms, clubhouse, pro shop and the new Renegade Grill. The facility would be a standout



There isn't much water on the course, but an acre's worth challenges approach shots to the 416 yard, 14th hole. Photo by Daniel Zelazek.

at any golf course in the state, and the new golf car fleet even comes equipped with GPS units. There is a separate teaching/practice building with roll-up doors and the latest swing analysis equipment so FSU golf team members and golf program students can practice and learn during inclement weather.

The old practice range has been retrofitted and re-contoured to provide

all sorts of playing conditions and shot-making situations with the addition of greenside bunkers, severe slopes and chipping areas for practice and proficiency in playing and teaching the game.

The course itself underwent some major renovations to the greens and tee complexes four years ago, when architect Bob Walker provided more

challenging contouring to the enlarged greens much to the delight of the golfing public of Tallahassee. The putting surfaces were converted from Tifgreen 328 to TifEagle ultradwarf making it possible to skip overseeding and maintain speedy greens year round. Only the routing of one hole, the 14th, was measurably altered by creating a dogleg around a new one-acre pond to

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COURSE FACTS



Seminole Golf Club

Location: Tallahassee

Ownership: Florida State University. Open to the public.

Number of Holes: 18; 7,147 yds; Par 73; Slope/Rating: 131/74.3

Designed by: Bill Amick. Opened: 1962. Redesign by Bob Walker in 2004. Work done by Quality Grassing & Services

Management Team: Tim Melloh, PGA Professional, club manager; John Forbes, PGA Professional, head golf professional; Doug Abbuhl, Class A GCSAA Member, golf course superintendent; Russ O'Quinn, Class C GCSAA Member, assistant superintendent.

FSU Golf Alumni: Hubert Green, Jane Geddes, Paul Azinger, Colleen Walker, Kenny Knox, Jeff Sluman, Lisa Walters and Nolan Henke.

Major renovations or ongoing projects: In 2007 added a new 21,000 square foot chipping green. We are growing in new 10-acre practice facility to be used by the FSU golf team and students in the PGM program. In 2003, rebuilt greens changing turf to TifEagle, added double row irrigation system and added 11,000 linear feet of cart path. Project architect Bob Walker.

Total acreage under maintenance: 120

Greens: TifEagle; avg size: 10,000-12,000 sq.ft. total 5 acres; HOC .125 winter, .140 summer; green speeds: 9-10; no overseeding.

Tees, Fairways and Roughs: Tifway 419; tees 4.5 acres, HOC .375, overseeding this year with intermediate ryegrass, previously used 3-way perennial ryegrass;

fairways 40 acres, HOC .375, overseeded with intermediate rye; roughs 20 acres, HOC 1.25; deep roughs bahiagrass, 40 acres; HOC 3 in. to 12 ft.

Bunkers: 39, white sand over lined bunkers with drains, hand- and machine-raked with Toro Sand Pro.

Natural areas: 5 acres on 14th hole. Many beds with crape myrtles and pinestraw mulch.

Waterways: 3 ponds with aeration fountains, total area 2 acres.

Irrigation: 3 wells; two 100-hp VFD pumps and one 7.5-hp submersible pump to maintain line pressure; 792 heads at 75-foot spacing; Rain Bird Cirrus System; fertigation: two 1,000-gallon tanks.

Water Management and Conservation Practices:

Northwest WMD. 500,000 gpd, 30,000,000 gpm.

Restrictions – cut back range, roughs, fairways, tees, slopes and then putting greens during shortages.

Staff: 30 including superintendent (16 full time and 14 part time – mostly FSU students).

Key staff specialists: Assistant Superintendent Russell O'Quinn; Pest Control Technician Tony Norton; Project Supervisor Ron Kammel; Horticulturist Ray Johnson; Senior Operators Jilian Bradley and Pemon Hamm. We had an OJT turf student from Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College in Tifton, Ga. this summer. We would like to have more turf students in the future.

I would like to pay tribute to our longtime Irrigation Technician Sip Collins. Sip passed away this past summer after 45 years at the course.

the left side of the green's approach.

The addition of multiple tee boxes kept the rolling course playable for all handicap levels. The course is just under 7,000 yards from the back tees, but the hilly terrain and five par-five holes means giving the future pros and top amateurs plenty of opportunity to let out the shaft.

In obviously striving to produce the best Professional Golf Management program and facilities I only hope the improvements don't stop at the top of the hill overlooking the rest of the golf course. Tucked away at the bottom of the hill is the 45-year old golf maintenance facility. It sorely needs upgrading to have a complete state-of-the-art operation from top to bottom for the whole property.

Future golf professionals should also be given tours of a model facility that serves as the center for golf course maintenance and environmental

stewardship - two keywords at the heart of issues facing every golf course in the state.

Without ample covered equipment-storage space or paved parking and service areas in maintenance compounds, the wear and tear on equipment from dirt and dust is accelerated which affects the life and performance of the turf grooming equipment. Investing in infrastructure like covered pump stations, etc isn't eye candy but it does pay such dividends as holding down maintenance and repair costs and keeps the irrigation system online during turf-stressing drought conditions.

Two investments that have paid off are a Sand Silo for storing topdressing material and two stand-alone self-contained storage buildings, one for fuel and oil and the other for pest control products. The Sand Silo keeps the sand dry, easy to apply and easy to brush in to minimize disruption to the

greens surfaces.

Every golf club benefits from friendly, up-front customer service, a functional clubhouse, a well-stocked pro shop and restaurant, but maybe even more so from well-conditioned turfgrass areas, and a functional, well-designed maintenance facility with new turf equipment on a capital replacement program to help deliver those desirable playing conditions.

It is a cooperative blend of all of these factors that make a golf club truly effective and successful. Abbuhi's name and the GCSAA logo are listed on the club's scorecard as part of the management team with PGA professionals Tim Melloh, the GM and director of golf and John Forbes, head golf professional. That's a good token of recognition of the importance that golf course maintenance plays in the success of a golf facility. I wish all golf clubs would do that simple gesture and then back it up with a sound maintenance

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A split rail fence and pine straw area borders the cart path down the left side of the 168-yard, 8th hole. Photo by Daniel Zelazek.

budget and facilities.

Because the Seminole GC is such a popular public golf course (60,000-70,000 rounds per year) — thanks in part to its excellent condition, affordable rates and discounted greens fees to university faculty and students — the course almost never closes.

Abbuhl and his staff are required to do the cultural practices in a three-hour “tee time gap” on Tuesdays from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. He understands the pressure for the course to be accessible and earning revenue, but there is often a flaw in the gap plan. He said, “If we get a slow foursome going off at 10 o’clock and the 1 p.m. group is a fast foursome or worse a twosome, our ‘gap’ shrinks rapidly, going from three hours to 30 minutes on some of our maintenance days.”

I have covered a lot of golf courses doing these cover stories, and I have to confess I can’t recall a golf course

SUPERINTENDENT FACTS

Doug Abbuhl: Class A Golf Course Superintendent

Born: Willamsfield, Ohio near Pymatuning Lake

Family: Two sons: Austin is 21 and enlisted in the U. S. Army. Noah is 11 and goes to Cobb Middle School

Education: Ohio University (2 years), Kent State University (2 years), University of Guelph, Ontario Turfgrass Program.

Employment: 1992-present, superintendent Seminole Golf Club; 1988-92 assistant superintendent Golden Eagle CC; 1986-1988 foreman/spray tech at Golden Eagle CC.

Professional Affiliations: Member of the USGA, FGCSA and GCSAA. Served on Coastal Plains GCSA board of directors as external vice president and now a past president of the chapter.

How did you get into the business? I was raised on a dairy farm in Ohio. I learned the value of hard work

from my parents and I loved being outdoors. Now Master Greenkeeper and consultant Terry Buchen, CGCS was my first superintendent. From him along with my next two bosses Dave Gardner and Jeff Veitmeier I learned different and important life and work lessons about the business.

Goals: I want to take our course to the “next level.” Not just a pretty course but a course where golfers of all skill levels will enjoy playing.

Work philosophy and advice: I never ask someone to do something I wouldn’t or haven’t done on the course myself. I try to tell people that it takes a very high level of commitment to do this job and don’t get into it unless you are willing to put in the time. But, it may be possible to put in too much time. My divorce may have been the result of spending too much time at work and not enough time with my family.

Memorable moments: Viewing wildlife on the golf course.

Hobbies: Swimming and snorkeling.



Superintendent Doug Abbuhl plants longleaf pines instead of slash pines on the course to restore the true native plant palette. Photo by Joel Jackson.